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CORRESPONDENCE.

EXCAVATIONS AT NAUKRATIS.

[The following interesting letter was written by Mr. Gardner, the explorer of Naukratis, to Dr. Charles Waldstein of Cambridge, Eng., for publication in the JOURNAL.]

NEBIREH (NAUKRATIS), TEL EL BARUD; LOWER EGYPT :
March 4, 1886.

It has been extremely fortunate for me to begin work under so able and experienced an excavator as Mr. Petrie. Though I have been alone, here, after the first month, I feel that any success I may have met with is due to a continuance of his methods; and, though he has with characteristic energy gone off to fresh fields as soon as he could leave Naukratis in other hands, the work here must still be regarded as belonging chiefly to him.

Three temples and a cemetery have occupied most of our attention this year. Two of these temples have been discovered only this season, and it is worth noting that both of them were found by a careful following up of chance indications, and not by independent trial-work. This latter, indeed, but rarely yields good results on such a site as this, where there are no natural features to guide the explorer, but all is a flat and indistinguishable labyrinth of mud-brick walls, covered over with heaps of potsherds of all styles and ages.

If one wishes to excavate a temple at Naukratis, one has to begin by unlearning all one's notions of what a Greek temple ought to be like. It is of no use looking for drums of columns or fragments of entablatures. Such, even in cases where they did exist, have invariably been broken up as soon as visible: the few pieces remaining are never enough to give much information as to their site. But, fortunately for us, the Greeks at Naukratis, as elsewhere, showed the versatility of their nature; and, since stone was not to be had without great difficulty in the Delta, they took to building in mud-brick faced with plaster; and this apparently more fragile structure has often remained, simply because it offers less attraction to the spoiler.

The temples both of the Dioscuri and of Aphrodite were of mud-brick, and a plan of both is consequently recoverable. The former even

has pillars in front of it, built of mud-brick faced with plaster. The temple of Aphrodite shows three distinct buildings of different periods, one above another; and to the earliest of these belongs a great altar in front, with steps leading up to it. This altar, like that of Zeus at Olympia, was composed of the ashes of victims, held together by a thin casing of brick.

But the importance of this temple does not lie chiefly in its architectural peculiarities. All around it there was found a thick layer of rubbish, consisting almost entirely of fragments of the finest archaic pottery: and almost all the best specimens of this are of a ware which probably belongs to Naukratis itself. I have roughly estimated the number of good fragments I have recovered from this layer at 150,000: this fact will give some notion of its richness; many pieces are inscribed; and many, I hope, will fit together into more or less complete wholes. Then some 100 archaic statuettes, mostly fragmentary, have also appeared: and these, dating as they do from the infancy of Greek art, will throw most valuable light on its relations with Egypt at that period. Nothing in this layer seems to be later than the middle of the sixth century B. C., and much is certainly earlier.

The temenos of the Samian Hera has also been recovered, but has not yet yielded much of intrinsic value, though fragments of a few dedicated vases have been found.

The main part, at least, of the cemetery lay to the north of the ancient city, not far from the canal that formed its highway to the sea. Unfortunately, a great part of it lies below a modern village; but a portion lying on an outlying mound has been completely turned over. Not many graves of the archaic period have been found, and none of value: later graves, from the fifth to the third century B. C., have been numerous, and have yielded a very fair collection of small vases, bronze mirrors, etc., and a large number of terracotta *gorgoneia* that seem once to have decorated the outside of wooden coffins. In one case, a small rouge-pot was found, with the rouge in it as fit for use as on the day it was buried.

The season is now drawing to an end, and I do not expect that much that is new in the way of discovery will occur; I have still one or two sites to finish clearing; but the year's results will be gathered mostly from what I have already stored here. To work these out will give me employment enough for some time to come.

ERNEST A. GARDNER.